REMARKS

In the final Office Action, the Examiner again rejected claims 15-17, 19, 22 and 44 pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gruner (U.S. Patent No. 5,634,466). Claims 20, 24 and 26 were again rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Gruner in view of Dunham et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,762,067). Claims 1-2, 4-8 and 36 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,39,689) in view of Garabedian et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,171,295). Claim 3 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner et al. in view of Garabedian et al. Claims 9, 23 and 28-35 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Conner et al. in view of Garabedian in further view of Gruner or Gruner in further view of Conner et al. in view of Garabedian et al. Claims 48-50 were allowed. Claim 25 was objected to as allowable if amended.

Independent claim 15 has been amended to clarify the circumference surrounded by the dielectric film. Claim 15 recites the circumference being over an emitting surface, a back and at least two sides of the ultrasound transducer. Gruner shows the sheet 114 in front of and along sides, but not surrounding a circumference that includes the back of the ultrasound transducer.

Previously allowed, but now rejected independent claim 24 and dependent claim 20 recite a thickness of the film less than 7 microns. The Examiner relies on Gruner in view of Dunham et al. For motivation to use the thickness provided by Dunham et al. in the film of Gruner, the Examiner notes that the film of Dunham et al. would be expected to perform equally well since both films are generally thin and both would provide the insulation desired. However, the film of Dunham et al. is used internally to the device (see Fig. 10). The membrane 164 is 0.1 mil Mylar, but a separate Mylar cover 162 provides external protection in Dunham et al. The mylar sheet 114 of Gruner is provided as an external cover (col. 4, lines 39-41 and Figures 7A and 7B). The mylar sheet 114 of Gruner appears to be the mylar cover 162 of Dunham et al. The mylar cover 162 of Dunham et al. is not disclosed as thin since physical protection is provided. The mylar sheet 114 of Gruner is not for internal use. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not have used the thin internal mylar of Dunham et al. as the

external cover of Gurner, especially where Dunham et al. teaches different mylar for use as external protection. A thin film would not have been used for external physical protection. A thick cover would have been used.

Independent claim 1 recites a non-conductive braid. The Examiner notes that Conner discloses a conductive braid. Instead, the Examiner relies on Garabedian et al. The braid of Garabedian et al. includes a non-conductive component of LCP. However, the braid of Garabedian et al. also includes at least one metallic member (col. 2, lines 10-17). The polymer portions are referred to as polymer members of the braid (col. 2, lines 33-36). The braid also includes metallic members (col. 4, lines 24-32 and col. 5, lines 10-24). As indicated by claim 1 of Garabedian et al., a braid with both metallic and non-metallic components is important (see also col. 2, lines 1-57). Incorporating the teachings of Garabedian et al. into the braid of Conner et al. provides for a conductive braid with non-conductive components. A person of ordinary skill in the art would not have used only non-conductive materials for the braid since such use is contrary to the teachings of Garabedian et al.

Independent claim 29 recites a non-conductive braid. As discussed above for claim 1, the cited references do not suggest a non-conductive braid.

The dependent claims are allowable for the same reason as the claims from which they depend or the same reasons discussed above for an independent claim with similar or the same limitation as the dependent claim. Further limitations of the dependent claims distinguished from the references cited to reject the claims.

Claim 6 recites the shaft free of electrically conductive material. Garabedian et al. includes a metal component in the braid. Conner et al. include a stainless steel braid.

Claim 17 recites the dielectric film as tape material. Gurner show a mylar sheet, but do not suggest that the sheet is a tape. Thin material does not disclose tape.

CONCLUSION:

Applicants respectfully submit that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and seeks early allowance thereof. If for any reason, the Examiner is unable to allow the application but believes that an interview would be helpful to resolve any issues, he is respectfully requested to call the undersigned at (650) 694-5810 or Craig Summerfield at (312) 321-4726.

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